



Strength in Plants *By Kate Murray*

Golden beets: tasty, earthy, and healthy

MOST OF the time, grocery stores carry the deep garnet-red beets, but if you're lucky, you can visit one of our local farm markets and find these beautiful, golden beets with concentric white stripes inside and a mild, soothing flavor.

My hope is that this simple recipe will help you kick-start your journey toward better health by introducing you and your family to an obscure vegetable that may not ordinarily make it into your basket every week. If you are already a beet lover, then read on for validation.

It has been said that beets are important for women because they can regulate hormones. In fact, one of the first-known uses for beets was for medicinal purposes as an aphrodisiac because they contain tryptophan, an amino acid that is a precursor to the neurotransmitters serotonin and melatonin.

Although I was born and raised in Berks County, I never actually heard much talk of beets other than at a friend's house where they made their own red beet eggs. My mother used the term gourmet well before the farm-to-table movement became fashionable, although it wasn't until I started participating in my first



SPECIAL TO THE READING EAGLE: KATE MURRAY

Salted golden beets taste great hot or cold.

farm share that I really gained an appreciation for this earthy powerhouse.

My favorite variety, the golden beet is not as widely available as the garnet red ones, so when you happen to see golden beets, my advice is buy as many as you can. You'll typically find them in abundance in the spring and summer in our area.

I find myself being more intentional about food now more than any other time in my life, by focusing on teaching my children about healthy eating and the connections between nutrition

and disease. Early childhood is an important foundation for health and well-being. Throughout the primary years, children are rapidly changing, growing and developing in both ability and personality. While regular exercise has been a major focus of educational curriculums, one of the most important components of overall wellness is often overlooked: proper nutrition.

By consuming a diet of mostly whole, plant-based foods, children are far more likely to avoid a host of problems that are beginning to show up far earlier these

days, such as diabetes and other cardiovascular diseases, cancers and chronic autoimmune diseases. According to a study by California researchers D.L. Jacobson and S.J. Gange, it is estimated that more than 9 million people in the United States have an autoimmune disease. Females are two to three times more likely than males to develop autoimmune diseases, and some estimates cite numbers as high as 12 million to 13 million people. The answer is really quite simple: fewer hot dogs, more vegetables.

If you find your children daring each other to eat dirt this summer, perhaps you'll have a reason to introduce the mild, dirt taste of the beet. Welcome to the movement.

It is my hope that you and your family continue finding strength in plants.

Salted golden beets

INGREDIENTS

1-2 lbs of golden beets
2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper
¼ cup aged balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoons goat cheese per 2 slices of beets

PREPARATION: Trim the beet greens and reserve for salad. Wash the beets well and peel off the skin. Slice them crosswise about 1/8 of an inch thick and bake on parchment paper with salt, pepper and olive oil for about 40 minutes at 400 degrees. Arrange 1 tablespoon of goat cheese between two slices of beet and sprinkle with balsamic vinegar. This dish tastes great hot or cold. ☺

Kate Murray is certified in plant-based nutrition and the author of "A Silent Cure in My Back Yard." Find more recipes at: astilentcure.org.

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